Adambel Clym of the clough and Wyllyam of Cloudelle,

Mery is it in grene forest
amonge the leues grene
where that men walke bothe est & west
wyth bowes and arowes kene
To ryse the deve out of theyr denne
Suche sightes as hath ofte benesene
as by the yemen of the north countrey
By them it is as I meane
The one of them hight Adam bel
The other Clym of the clough
the thyrd was william of Cloudelly
an archer good ynough
they were outlawed for venyson
these thre yemen were chone
they swore them bretherhed vpon a day
to Englysshe wood for to gone
Now lith and lysten gentylmen
and that of myrthes ye may here
two of them were singele men
the third had a wedded fere
wylliam was the wedded man
Muche more then was hys care
He sayde to hys bretheren vpon a day
to Carelel he would fare
For to speke with fayre alse hys wife
and with hys chyldren thre
By my trouthe sayde Adam bel
Not by the counsell of me
For yf ye go to Carelel brother
and from thys wylde wode wende
If the Justice may you take
your lyfe were at an ende

By pryme to you agayne
Trust not els but that I am take
Or elsse that I am slayne
He toke hys leaue of hys brethen two
And to Carlel he is gone
There he knocked at hys owne wyndowe
Shortlye and a none
wher be your fayre alyce my wyfe
and my chyldren thre
Lyghtlye let in thyne husbande
wyllyam of Cloudesle
alas then sayde fayre alyce
and syghed wonderous sore
Thys place hath ben besette for you
Thys halfe yere and more
Now am I here sayde Cloudesle
In woulde that I in were
Now fecche vs meate and drynke enoughe
and let vs make good chere
She fetched hym meat and drynke plenty
Lyke a true wedded wyfe
and pleased hym with that she had
whome she loued as her lyfe
There lay an old wyfe in that place
a lytle beside the fyre
which wyllyam had found of charyte
More then seuen yere
Up she rose and walked full syll
Euel mote she spende there foode
For she had not let no lote on ground
In seuen yere before

She went vnto the Justice hall
As fast as she could dre
Thys nyght is come vn to thys town
Wyllyam of Cloudelle
Thereof the Justice was full fayne
And so was the shirife also
Thou shalt not trauaile hether dere forewoun
Thy meed thou shalt haue or thou go (gyft
They gaue to her a ryght good goune
Of scarlat it was as I herde saye
She toke the gyft and home she wente
And couched her doune agayne
They ryled the towne of mery Carlel
In all the hast that they can
And came thronging to wyllyames house
As fast they might gone
They they besette that good yeman
Round a bout on euery syde
wyllyam herde great noyse of folkes
that heyther ward dyed
Alyce opened a shop wyndow
And loked all a bout
She was ware of the Justice and the shrife
wyth a great full great route (bothe
alas treasone cryed alyce
Euer wo may thou be
Gy into my chamber, my husbond she sayd
swete wyllyam of Cloudelle
He toke hys sweard and hys bucler
Hys bow and hys shyttyng gere
and went into hys strongest chamber
where he thought surest to be

Fayre alice followed of his louers three
with a pollaxe in her hande
He shalbe deade that here cõmeth in
Thys daye whyle I may stand
Cloudesle bent a wel good bowe
That was of trusty tre
He smot the Justice on the brest
That hys arrowe brest in thre
Gods curse on his hart sayde william
Thys day thy cote dyd on
If it had ben no better then myne
It had gone nere thy bone
yelde the Cloudesle sayd the Justice
And thy bowe ād thy arrowes the fro
Gods curse on hys hart sayde fair alice
That my husband counceleth so
Set fyre on the house saide ȳ Sheryfe
Sythit wyll no better be
and brenne we therin william he saide
Hys wyfe and chyldren thre
They fyred the house in many a place
The fyre flew vpon hye
alas than cryed fayr alice
I se we shall here dy
William openyd hys backe wyndow
That was on hys chambre on hye
And wyth shetes let hys wyfe downe
and hys chyldren thre
Haue here my treasure sayde william
My wyfe and my chyldren thre
For Christes loue do them no harme
But wreke you all on me

Tyll hys arrowes were all gon
and the fyre to fall vpon hym fell
That hys bo string brent in two
the sperces brent and fell hym vn
Good wyllyam of Cloudesle
But than was he a wofull man
and sayde thys is a cowardes death to me
Lever I had sayde wyllyam
with my sworde in the route to renne
Then here a mong myne enmyes wode
thus cruelly to bren
He toke hys sweard and hys buckler
And a mong them all he ran
where the people were most in prece
He smot downe many a man
There myght no man stand hys stroke
So fersly on them he ran
then they threw wyndowes and doores on him
And so toke that good yeman
there they hym bounde both hand and fote
And in depe dongeon hym cast
Now Cloudesle sayde the hye Justice
thou shalt be hanged in hast
Or e now shal I make sayde the sherife
A payre of new galowes shall I for the make
and al the gates of Caerlel shalbe shutte
ffe re shall no man come in ther at
Then shall net helpe him of the clo ughe
Nor yet adam bell
though they come with a thousand mo
Nor all the deuels in hell.

Early

To the gates fastyan he gon
and commaunded to be shut full clote
Lightlie euery chone
Then went he to the market place
as fast as he coulde hye
a payze of new gallows there dyd he vp set
Beside the pyllory
a lytle boy stod them amonge
and asked what meaned that gallow tre
They sayde to hange a good yeaman
Called Wyllyam of cloudesle
that lytle boye was the to wne swyne heard
and kept there alyce swyne
Full oft he had sene Cloudesle in the wodde
and geuen hym there to dyne
He went out of arreues in the wall
and lightly to the woode dyd gone
There met he with these wyght yonge men
Shortly and a none
alas then sayde that lytle boye
ye tary here all to longe
Cloudesle is taken and dampned to deth
all redye for to honge
alas then sayde good adam bell
that euer we see thys daye
He myght her with vs haue dwelled
So ofte as we dyd hym praye
He myght haue tarryed vngrete sorrowe
Under the shadowes sheene
and haue kepte both hym and vs in reaste
Out of trouble and teene

A great hart lone had he slayne
Take that chylde he sayde to thy dynner
and bryng me myne arrowe a gayne
Now go we hence sayed these wight yong men
Tary we no lenger here
We shall hym borowe by gods grace
Though we bye it full dere
To Carlel went these good yemen
In a mery morning of May
Her is a fyt of Cloudesli
And a nother is for to saye
AND when they came to mery Carelell
In a fayre morning tyde
They founde the gates shut them vntyll
Round a bout on euery syde
Alas then sayd good Adam bell
That euer we were made men
these gates be shut so wonderous wel
That we may not come here in
then spake Clym of the Clough
wyth a wyle we wyl vs in bryng
Lee vs saye we be messengers
Strayght come nowe from our king
Adam said I haue a letter wryttē wel
Now let vs wysely werke
we wyl saye we haue the kyges seales
I hold the porter no clerke
then Adam bell bete on the gate
with strokes great and strong
the porter herde such noyse therat
And to the gate he throng

Who is there now sayde the porter
That maketh all thys knocking,
we be tow messengers sayde Clim of ỹ clough
We come ryght from our kyng
we haue a letter sayde adam bel
to the Justice me must it bryng
Let vs in our message to do
That we were a gayne to our kyng
Here commeth none in sayd ỹ porter
Be hym that dyed vpon a tre
Tyll a false theef be hanged
Called Wyllyam of Cloudesle
Then spake ỹ good yeman Clym of ỹ clough
And swore by mary fre
If that we stande long wythout
Lyke a theef hanged shalt thou be
Lo here we haue the kynges seale
What lo[r]deyne art thou wode
The porter had went it had ben so
And lyghtly dyd of hys hode
Welcome be my lo[r]des seale he saide
For that ye shall come in
He opened the gate full shortly
An entyl openyng for him
Now are we in sayde Adam bell
Therof we are full faine
But Christ know that harowed hell
How we shall com out a gayne
Had we ỹ keys said clim of ỹ clough
Ryght wel then shulde we spede
Then might we cõe out wel ynough
when we se tyme and nede

They

And wronge hys necke in two
And cast hym in a depe dongeon
And toke hys keys hym fro
Now am I porter layde Adam bel
Be brother the keys haue we here
the worst porter to merry Caerlel
that ye had thys hundred yere
Now wyll we our bowes bend
Into the towne wyll we go
For to delyuer our dere brother
where he lyueth in care and wo
they bent theyr bowes
And loked theyr strynges were round
the market place in mery Caerlel
they be set that stound
And as they loked them besyde
a paire of new galowes ther they see
And they Justice with a quest of squyers
that had Judged Cloudesle there hãged to be
And Cloudesle hym selfe lay redy in a carte
Fast both fote and hand
And a stronge rop a bout hys necke
All ready for to hange
the Justice called to hym a lad
Cloudesle clothes should he haue
to take the measure of that yeman
and therafter to make hys graue
I haue se as great a meatuelle said cloudesle
as be twyene thys and pryme
He that maketh thys gresue for me
Hym selfe may lye therin

thou speakest proudly sayde ꝑ Justice
I shall the hange with my yande
Full well herd hys brethren two
there styll as they ord stande
then Claudesle cast his eyen a syde
and saw hys to brethen
At a corner of the marked place
With theyr good bowes bet in ther hand
Redy the Justice for to chaunce
I se comfort sayd Clousdesle
yet hope I wyll to fare
If I might haue my handes at wyll
Ryght lytle wolde I care
then spake good adam bell
to Clym of the clough so free
Brother se ye marke the Justyce wel
Lo yonder ye may him see
And at the shyrfe shote I wyll
Strongly wyth arrowe kene
A better shote in mery Caerliel
thys seuen yere was not sene
they lowsed thre arrowes both at once
Of no man had the dread
the one hyt the Justice the other the sheryfe
that both there sydes gan blede
all men voyded that them stode nye
when the Justice fell downe to the grounde
and the sherife fell myghtyly by
Eyther had hys deathes wounde
all the Citezens fast gan flye
they durst no lenger abyde
there lyghtly they louted Clousdelle

where

Where he with ropes lay tyde
wylliam flerte to an officer of ꝑ towñ
Hys axe out of hys hande he wronge
On eche syde he smote them downe
Hym thought he tarryed all to longe
wyllyam sayde to hys brethen two
Thys daye let vs lyue and dye
If euer you haue nede as I haue now
The same shall you fynde by me
They shot so well in that tyde
For theyr strynges were of lyke fulfure
that they kept ꝑ stretes on euery syde
That batayle dyd longe endure
the fought together as brethen true
Lyke hardy men and bolde
Many a man to the grouñd they dyue
And made many a herte colde
But when their arrowes were al gon
Men preced to them full fast
they drew theyr swordes then a none
And theyr bowes from them cast
they went lyghtly on theyr way
wyth swordes and bucklers round
By that it was myd of the day
they made many a wound
there was many an out horne in Lacelblo
and the belles backward dyd ryng (wer
Many a woman sayde alas
and many theyr handes dyd wryng
the mayre of Lacriel fayth com was
and wyth hym a fulgeat rout
these yemen dred hym full sore

the mayre came armed a full great pace
with a pollaxe in hys hande
Many a strong man wyth him was
there in that stowre to stande
ỳ mayre smot at cloudesle wyth hys bil
hys bucler he brust in two
Full many a yeman wt great eyll
alas treason they cryed for wo
Kepe we the gates fast they bad
ỳ these traytours thereout not go
But al for nought was ỳ ỳ wrought
For to fast they downe were layed
tyll they all three ỳ so mãfully fought
were gotten with out a braide
Have here your keys sayd adam bel
yf you do by my councell
Wyne office I here forsake
a new porter do we make
He threw they re keys at they re heads
and bad them evell to thryve
and all that letteth any good yemã
to come and comfort hys wyfe
thus be these good yemẽ gõ to ỳ wod
as lyghtly as lefe on lynde
the lough an be mery in they re mode
they re enemyes were fere behynd
when they came to Englysshe wode
Under the trusty tre
they found bowes full good
and arrowes full great plentye
So god me help ỳs adam bell

And lyen vnder the cloughe tre
I would we were in mery Carlel
Before that fayre meyny
They set them downe and made good chere
and eate and dryncke full well
Here is a token these wyght yong men
Another I wyll you tell
AS they sat in Englyshe wood
Under they trusty tre
They thaught they herd a woman wepe
But her they nought not se
Sore syghed the fayre Alyce
and sayde alas that euer I sawe thys daye
For now is my dere husband slayne
alas and wel a way
Wyght I haue spoken wyth hys dere brethen
Or with eyther of them twayne
My hart were put out of payne
Cloudesle walked a lytle beside
and loked vnder the grene wood linde
He was ware of hys wife and chyldren thre
Full wo in hart and mynde
welcome wife then sayde wyllyam
Under thys trusty tre
I had wende yester day by swete sayut John
Thou shulde me neuer had se
Now well is me sayde that fayre be here
My hart is out of wo
Dame he sayde be mery and glad
and thanke my brethen two
Here of to speake sayd adam bel
I wys it is no bote

It runneth yet fast an kote
Then went they downe in to a lande
These noble archares all thre
Eche of them slew a hart of grace
The best they cowld there se
Have here the best alce my wyfe
Sayde wyllyam of Cloudesle
By cause ye so boldly stod by me
when I was slayne fullnye
Then when they to supper
And thanked god of ther fortune
wyth suche meat as they had
they were both mery and glad
and when they had supped well
Certayne wythout any leace
Cloudesle sayd we wyll to our kyng
to get vs a charter of peace
alce shalbe at our soiournyng
In a nunnery here besyde
My tow sonnes shall wyth her go
and there they shall a byde
Myne eldest son shall go wyth me
For hym have I no care
and he shall you breng worde a gayn
How that we do fare
thus be these good yemen to London gone
as fast as they myght hye
tyll they came to the kynges pallace
there they wolde nedes be
and whan they came to the kynges courte
Unto the pallace gate

But boldly went in ther at
they preced prestly into the hall
Of no man had they dreade
the porter came after and dyd them call
And with them began to chyde
the vsher sayed yemen what wold ye haue
I pray you tell me
you myght thus make officers shent
Goodsyrs of whence be ye
Sayd we be outlawes of the forest
Certayne without any leace
and hether we become to our kyng
ta get vs a charter of peace
and whan they came before the kyng
as it was the lawe of the lande
the kneled downe without lettyng
and eache held vp his hand
the sayed Lord we beseche the here
that ye wyll graunt vs grace
For we haue slayne your fat falow der
In many a londry place
what is your names than said our kyng
anone that you tell me
they sayd adam bel clim of the clough
and wyllyam of Cloudesle
Be ye those theues the sayd our king
that men haue tolde of to me
Here to god, I make a vowe
ye shalbe hanged all thre
ye shalbe dead without e mercy
as I am kyng of this lande

Fast on them to lay hand
There they toke these good yemen
and arested them all thre
So may I thryue sayd adam bell
Thys game lyketh not me
But good lorde we beseche you now
That you graunt vs grace
In somuche as we be to you comen
Or els that we may fro you passe
with such weapons as we haue here
Evil we be out of your place
And yf we lyue this hundreth yere
we wyll aske you no grace
ye scape proudly sayd the kynge
ye shalbe hanged all thre
That were great pitye then sayd the Quene
If any grace myght be
My lorde whan I came fyrst into this lande
To be your wedded wyfe
the fyrst bowne that I wold aske
ye would graunt it me belyfe
and I aske neuer none vyll now
Therfore good lorde graunt it me
Now aske it madame sayd the kynge
And graunted shall it be
Then good lorde I you beseche
The yemen graunt yeme
Madame ye myght haue asked a bowne
That shuld haue ben worth them all three
ye myght haue asked towres and towne
Parkes and forestes plenty

Nor none so leke to me
Madame sith it is your desyre
your askyng graunted shalbe
But I had leuer haue geuen you
Good market townes thre
the Quene was a glad woman
and sayd lord gramarcy
I dare vndertake for them
that true men shall they be
But good lord speke som mery word
that they comfort may se
I graunt you grace then sayd our kyng
wallshe felos and to me ate go ye
they had not setten but a whyle
Certayne without lesynge
there came messengers out of ỹ north
with letters to our kyng
and whan the came before the kynge
the kneled downe vpon they re knee
and sayd lord your officers grete you wel
Of Caerlel in the north cuntre
How fare my Justice sayd the kyng
and my Sherife also
Syr they be slayne without leasynge
and many an officer mo
who hath them slayne sayd the kyng
anone thou tell me
Adam bel and Clime of the clough
and wyllyam of Cloudesle
alas for rewth then sayd our kynge
My hart is wonderous sore

I had leuer and a thousand pounde
I had knowne of thys before
For I haue graunted them grace
And that for thynketh me
But had I knowne all thys before
They had ben hanged all thre
The kyng opened the letter anone
Hym selfe he red it tho
& founde how these thre outlawes had slaine
Thre hundred men and mo
Fyll the Justyce and the Shervle
And the mayre of Caerlel towne
Of all the Cõstables & catchipolles
Alyue were left not one
The Baylyes and the bedyls both
and the sergeauntes of the law
And forty fosters of the fe
these outlawes hady slaw
And broke his parks & slaine hys dere
Ouer all they chose the best
So perelous outlawes as they were
Walked not by easte nor west
when the kynge this letter had red
In hys harte he syghed sore
take vp the table anone he bad
For I may eate no more
the kyng called hys best archars
To the buttes with hym to go
I wyll se these fellowes shote he sayd
That in the North haue wrought this wo
the kynges bowmen buske them blyue
And the Quenes archers also

With them they thought to go
There twyse or thryse they shote about
For to assay theyr hande
There was no shote these thre yemen shot
that any pryncke myght them stand
Then spake wyllyam of Cloudesle
By god that for me dyed
I hold hym neuer no good archar
that shuteth at buttes so wyde
Wher at then sayd our kyng
I pray thee tell me
at suche a butt yr he sayd
As men vse in my countree
Wyllyam went into a fyeld
And his to brothren with him
there they set vp two hasell roddes
twenty score paces betwene
I hold him an archar said Cloudesle
that yonder wande cleueth in two
Here is none suche sayd the kyng
Nor none that can so do
I shall assaye yr sayd Cloudesle
Or that I farther go
Cloudesly with a bearyng arow
Claue the wand in to
thou art ꝑ best archer the said ꝑ kyng
For sothe that euer I se
And yet for your sowle sayd wyllam
I wyll do more maystry
I haue a sonne is seuen yere olde
Hee is to me full dere

All shall se that be here
And lay an apele vpon hys head
and go fyue score paces hym fro
and I myselfe with a brode arowe
Shall cleve the apple in two
Now hast the then sayd the kyng
By hym that dyed on a tre
But yf thou do not as I the layde
Hanged shalt thou be
and thou touche his head or cowne
In syght that men may se
By al the sayntes that be in heuē
I shall hange you all thre
that I haue promised said williams
I wyll it neuer forsake
and there euen before the kynge
In the earth he droue a stake
and bound therto his eldest sonne
and bad hym stande styll therat
and turned the childes face fro him
Because he shuld not sterte
an apple vpon his head he set
and then his bowe he bent
fyue score paces they were out met
and thether Cloudesle went
there he drew out a fayre brode arrowe
Hys bowe was great and longe
He set that arrowe in his bowe
that was both stytte and stronge
He prayed the people that was there
that they would stylle stande

Behoueth a stedfast hand
Muche people prayed for Cloudelle
That hys lyfe saued myght be
And whan he made hym redy to shote
there was many a weping eye
thus Cloudelle cleft the apple in two
That many a man myght se
Ouer Gods forbode sayde the kinge
That thou shote at me
I geue the .xviii. pence a day
And my bowe shalt thou beare
and ouer all the north countre
I make the chyfe ryderre
And I geue the .xvii. pence a day sayd ỹ quene
By god and by my fay
Come fetche thy payment when thou wylt
No man shall say the nay
Wyllyam I make the a gentelman
Of clothyng and of fe
And thi two brethen yemen of my chambre
For they are so semely to se
your sonne for he is tendre of age
Of my wyne seller shal he be
and whan he commeth to mannes estate
Better auaunced shall he be
and wyllyam bring me your wife sayd ỹ quene
Me longeth her sore to se
She shal be my chefe gentelwoman
And gouerne my nursery
The yemen thanketh them full curteously
And sayde to some bysshop wyl we wend

Of all

to be alloyed of his hond
So forth bygone these good yemen
As fast as they myght dye
and after came and dwelled wyth the kynge
And dyed good men all thre
thus endeth the lyues of these good yemen
God send them eternall blysse
and all that with hande bowe shoteth
that of heauen may neuer mysse.

Finis.

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